

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 002572

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W
STATE FOR CA/OCS/FROBINSON
STATE FOR EB/ESC/IEC/ENR/BLEVINE
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF
STAT FOR INR/AA
STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY
STATE PASS TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
STATE PASS DOC FOR PHUPER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR CDUFFY
STATE PASS TDA FOR BTERNET
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR SLISER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/27/2014
TAGS: [EPET](#) [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: SEABULK EMPLOYEE TAKEN HOSTAGE

Classified By: Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reason
s 1.4 (D & E)

Summary

1. (C) Seabulk reported to Energy Off on 26 December that an employee was taken hostage near Amatu, Bayelsa State, on 25 December while carrying out operations for Shell. The employee is a Croatian national. The Iduwini National Movement for Peace and Development is demanding ransom and other concessions from Shell and its contractors for his release. Shell and Seabulk are negotiating with Delta and Bayelsa state and local officials tomorrow, 28 December. The Seabulk Managing Director recently reported to us that security in the Delta region is becoming less certain, and Seabulk has had to forgo contracts and lose money due to increased security concerns.

Seabulk Croatian Employee Kidnapped From Vessel at Gunpoint

2. (C) Managing Director (MD) Robert Clemmons of Seabulk reported that Croatian employee, engineer Ivan Roso, was taken hostage near Amatu, Bayelsa State, approximately 20 miles off-shore of the Dodo River, on 25 December. A Seabulk vessel was operating for Shell when it was approached by a heavily armed boat mounted with a 50-caliber machine gun. Bandits commandeered the Seabulk vessel; the vessel and most of the crew were eventually released. However, Roso, the first mate, was retained as a hostage; it is not clear why he was targeted. Seabulk management believes Roso is possibly being held at an old cement factory in Bayelsa State. Clemmons stated that reports indicate Roso is being treated well.

Iduwini National Movement Makes Ransom Demands

3. (C) Clemmons reports a group called the Iduwini National Movement for Peace and Development has made numerous demands for Roso's release, including ransom ranging from 20 million to 50 million Naira (approximately 147,000 USD to 367,000 USD). Clemmons stated that Seabulk appears to have been caught in the middle of a dispute between Shell; Shell's normal contractor in the area, Maersk; and members of the Iduwini Movement. (Note: Seabulk had agreed to lift oil for Shell during the holidays, as its normal contractor for this area, Maersk, was not operating. End note.) Additional demands by the Iduwini National Movement for Roso's release are directed towards Shell and Maersk, and relate to employment, memorandums of understanding, and ceasing legal action against the group. Clemmons charged Shell, in critical need of a substitute for Maersk, with concealing the true level of operational risk in the area from Seabulk.

Negotiations On-Going in Bayelsa and Delta

4. (C) Clemmons reported Shell is taking the lead role in the negotiations; Shell and Seabulk are seeking assistance from both Bayelsa and Delta State officials. (While Roso was kidnapped in Bayelsa State, many key security officials for both the government and Shell are based in Warri, Delta State.) In line with advice from the CG, Clemmons will meet tomorrow, 28 December, with the Delta State Governor and other officials to seek assistance prior entering negotiations with the Iduwini Movement. The CG has offered to further assist by interceding with state officials if Seabulk believes it is necessary. Energy Off, RSO, and ACS Officer have maintained regular contact with Clemmons, and

have given him advice on negotiations and personal safety as he travels in the Delta region. (Note: Clemmons is an AMCIT, and a regular Consulate contact in tracking events in the region.)

Clemmons had Predicted Upswing in Violence

15. (C) In a discussion with Energy Off one week ago, Clemmons predicted an upswing in violence in the Delta again after the holidays, when operations again return to full swing. Consistent with other recent reports from interlocutors in the region, Clemmons stated security in the Delta region is becoming critical. Retaining staff is becoming a large issue; the captain of the vessel commandeered on 25 December is leaving the country. Clemmons observed that security costs are escalating significantly. For example, entry into an area now requires prior negotiations with the community. Seabulk maintains on-going discussions with 17 communities to support its current operations. These security complications have caused Seabulk to lose several million dollars in the last few months in increased costs and lost business opportunities.

Donated Chevron Boats May Pose a Danger

16. (C) Clemmons also claimed that two speed boats donated by Chevron Texaco to its host community in Escravos are now being used to hold up maritime vessels. Clemmons reported the vessels are capable of 28 and 32 knots, and are faster than any Seabulk vessel, placing his and other maritime crews in considerable danger. Clemmons reported at least one of the vessels has a 50-caliber machine gun mounted on it.

(Comment: We cannot currently confirm this claim about the use of the Chevron-donated boats. However, it highlights the complexities of operating in the Delta. Assets used to resolve one problem can transform to cause another problem. We will check with Chevron to learn the current status of the two donated boats, and comment septel. End comment.)

BROWNE